

QUALITY ASSURANCE 2008

Quality assurance procedure

Here at Little Angels we value the views and opinions, enjoyment and experience of children, staff and parents using the Nursery. We ensure that we are providing ample opportunities to communicate any comments of dissatisfaction or praise in a manner of ways. These comments assist us in ensuring that we are providing a high quality service as a day care provider and employer. This quality of care is reviewed annually and a report constructed to display results and any necessary action taken in line with these.

This is generally achieved through the following means;

- Talking and listening to children
- Specifically designed activities for children
- Monitoring questionnaires for parents
- Monitoring questionnaires for staff
- Leavers forms
- Parents week
- Open access door policy
- Enquiry monitoring form
- Children's leaving gifts and notes of thank you
- Suggestion notes
- Complaints policy
- One on one staff meetings and appraisals
- Staff exit interviews
- Staff meeting agendas and minutes

We obtain the views of the children attending, the parents of relevant children, (if relevant), a local authority arranging for child care for a relevant child and staff employed to look after the relevant children.

Outlined on the following pages are the procedures used to obtain the views of each party involved.

Consulting Children

Children are generally very open and honest and will discuss their feelings and likes and dislikes, if presented in a relaxed and un-intrusive manner. It is essential that we allow the children within our care, time to express their feelings and views and listen and take these on board and find ways of amending or highlighting them. Communication is essential, though to be effective, we must take account the various ways in which children express themselves. Here at Little Angels we have devised a number of example activities or means of allowing the children to express their feelings and for the staff to observe and capture these. The results of these are noted and recorded and form a part of this annual quality assurance report.

- Take numerous photographs to capture and reflect the children's enjoyment of various activities. These are displayed on the Messy play board, placed in the children's development files and will be used within the quality monitoring annual report.

- Children of all ages are also given free play sessions where they can select which toys they wish to play with or activities they wish to undertake, which indicates activities/toys they enjoy and hold preference towards.
- The older children are also given free play sessions to obtain their preferences for activities and toys. Additionally they are asked a number of questions each month to obtain their views with regard to their enjoyment and experiences at the Nursery.
- They learn about the various emotions and expressions to reflect each. They are then encouraged to implement these in line with the Nursery, activities offered and toys provided labelling each with the pictures to ascertain a true outline of their enjoyment and views.
- Discuss home and Nursery and the things they miss from each.

The children were observed in line with all of the above and various means of recording were used. All answers were also recorded and monitored, and if necessary a means of improvement outlined, activities/toys adapted or indeed maintain in line with these.

As younger children are unable to communicate their feelings verbally, they will generally become apparent through their behaviour. Thus Little Angels closely liaises with parents, noting any significant change in their child's behaviour either at Nursery or at home and record this on the form provided. This communication process assists the parents and Nursery in monitoring and reviewing the child's behaviour and ensuring that we provide the best quality care for their child.

Consulting Parents

Parents are a vital insight to the Nurseries quality of service, thus their opinions and views are obtained and utilised throughout the process of registering, caring for and dealing with a child leaving. Here at Little Angels we have devised a number of means of allowing the parents to express their views and feelings and for the Nursery to take note of and record these. The results of these were noted and recorded and form a part of this annual quality assurance report.

- When parents initially visit the Nursery for their tour, they are given a short questionnaire asking them to state their views and opinions on what they have seen. This aids the Nursery in identifying patterns in areas of success and those which may require amending. It also provides us with an insight into why parents have or have not decided to select the Nursery.
- All parents are issued with our quality monitoring questionnaire annually to provide us with a continuous method of monitoring the service we provide. These are strictly confidential and anonymous, allowing parents' to openly and honestly answer any questions. These were distributed last in July 2008.
- Parents weeks are also held every 6-8 months, providing parents with the opportunity of communicating any concerns or opinions to staff and Managers verbally and in confidence. This again assists us in the process on continually monitoring the service we provide.
- We have an open door access policy, where parents/guardians are welcome to visit the Nursery to discuss any matters with the Manager. This is highlighted within the access to information policy within the parents' handbook provided on registering their child.

- A suggestion form is also in place, where parents may freely write comments, confidentially and anonymously if preferred, on the slips provided. These are then addressed by the Manager.
- We also consider all concerns/complaints, irrelevant of their severity, and note the main area of concern and working alongside the parents devise a resolution or plan of action to try and ensure all parties involved are happy with the outcome.
- We monitor and take note of the thank you cards we receive when various children leave and the chocolates, cards and presents we receive at Christmas time under the tree for the enjoyment of the Managers and staff.

The results drawn from the above are discussed amongst all Management and staff if necessary, to devise means of improving, provide praise or consider any issues arisen. These are monitored when received and annually in line with this report.

As a registered Nursery, Little Angels is inspected annually by CSSIW. A copy of the report is freely available for all parents to view. We also encourage any comments, concerns or questions relating to the report. The Nursery also takes account of the advice and recommendations provided by the Environmental Health Officers, Building Control and Fire Safety Department and ensure that we have fulfilled any requirements within the set time scale.

Consulting Staff

The happiness and satisfaction of staff is vital in providing a friendly atmosphere for the children attending, thus it is essential that we monitor their work and overall motivation. Here at Little Angels we have devised a number of means of allowing the staff to express their views and feelings and for the Nursery to take note of and record these. The results of these are noted and recorded and form a part of this annual quality assurance report.

- Little Angels holds a full induction session with all new employees to ensure that they are provided with the knowledge to allow them to be confident within their work. They are also provided with the necessary literature to accommodate this.
- All staff follow a three monthly probationary period where their work is closely monitored and assessed at the end of each month. Following this the staff are then given three monthly monitoring meetings to discuss their performance to date. These are supported with sessional evaluations and set observations of the staff at work. All information from these are then put together to form their annual appraisals to ensure that their level of work is of a high standard and that any queries, concerns or anxieties they may be feeling at home or at work are discussed and hopefully resolved.
- All staff are provide with the knowledge and reassurance that they may speak to any Senior member of staff, the Deputy Manager or Nursery Manager or Proprietors at any time within their employment should they wish to. The open door policy also applies to all employees.
- All staff are issued with our staff quality monitoring questionnaire annually. The results of these are drawn up recorded and summarized and discussed amongst all management and individual staff if necessary, to devise means of improving areas, procedure etc, provide praise or consider any issues arisen. These were last distributed in April 2008.

- All staff also have the opportunity of discussing their questionnaire answers individually with the proprietors in a confidential meeting.
- All staff attend regular staff meetings and training sessions. The agenda and minutes for these meetings are all kept on file. These are again considered within the week following the meeting and action is taken, if required, in line with each.
- Additionally the manager herself carries out 'spot inspections' to ascertain the staffs involvement, achievement, meeting of standards and overall running of the Nursery in practice.
- In order of assessing the success of the Nursery ethos in relation to its employee's, Little Angels also carries out exit interviews with all staff on leaving to ascertain their reasons for leaving and overall opinion of the position undertaken to date.

The views and feelings of all staff members are considered in line with each of the above. The results are drawn where necessary and discussed amongst Management and staff if necessary to devise a means of improving or maintaining various aspects of the Nursery.

CHILDREN (Under three)

The staff take numerous photographs to capture and reflect the children's enjoyment of various activities. These are displayed on the Messy Play Board in both the Caterpillars and Bumble Bees room and placed in the children's individual developmental files. The children are also given free play sessions where the children are able to independently select which toys they wish to play with or activities they wish to partake within. Through monitoring this we are able to gauge the toys/activities the children individually and as a whole, enjoyed and hold preference towards or dislike and are uninterested within.

Result: Our monitoring results showed that the children again this year thoroughly love the messy activities involving shaving foam, free painting, glupe, baked beans etc The introduction of more activities has worked well and we will continue with these during 2009.

The children again enjoyed looking at books and the purchase of additional soft toys has assisted in maintaining this interest during this year.

Additionally this year it was noted that the children particularly enjoyed playing with the soft play and in the tents. We have thus rostered this in for additional sessions during 2009 and have purchased an igloo tent to maintain play during the Winter Theme.

All children, at some point during each day, are given a freedom of choice to select activities which they would like to partake within or toys they would like to play with. The younger children have all toys displayed and are free to select which they would like to play with. The older children are shown pictures or informed verbally of the toys and activities available and are free to select which they would like to do. This allows the staff to monitor children's preferences and ensures the children are involved within child-led activities and are not constantly being directed by the staff.

Result Our monitoring results indicated that a large majority of children enjoyed playing imaginatively within the home corner and creatively within the art section. For 2009 we are thus looking to focus our learning outcomes around these areas offering activities and an element of structured learning within each.

CHILDREN (Over three)

The older children are also given free play sessions to obtain a view of their preferences for activities and toys. Additionally they are asked a number of questions each month to obtain their views with regard to their enjoyment and experience at the Nursery. All answers were recorded and monitored and if necessary an outline to improve, adapt or maintain activities/toys was drawn in line with these. The children also learnt about the various emotions we can experience and learn how these are communicated through various facial expressions. The children were then encouraged to use these to display their feelings in line with various situations, activities and toys within the Nursery.

Result: Children within the Grasshoppers room showed a greater interest in the train traks and thus a larger portion has now been moved from the Bumble Bees room.

The children showed a large interest in free drawing but had restricted access as the tables were often used for other activities. We have thus now brought in the painting easels for chalking, white board drawing and free drawing to allow flexibility and access for more children. During the following month 11 additional children expressed and interest within drawing.

Children displayed an interest in playing with the soft play and in the tents. We have thus rostered this in for additional sessions during 2009 as a physical activity to replace the garden if the weather is particularly poor and have purchased an igloo tent to maintain play during the Winter Theme.

The children thoroughly enjoyed posing for the emotions pictures and these have been displayed as a point of reference and to refresh and introduce to new children on joining.

The children have also showed a vast amount of interest within the home corner during the last few months. We have thus re-arranged the layout allowing more children to play freely within. We have also purchased a variety of food from around the world to broaden the children's knowledge of food. We recently started the healthy eating snack award scheme which may have envoked this interest.

PARENTS

All parents are encouraged to share their views and concerns or words of praise through our open door policy. However there are also a number of other means by which we obtain the views and opinions of perspective, current and past parents.

When parents initially visit the Nursery for their tour, they are given a short questionnaire asking them to state their views and opinions on what they have seen. This aids the Nursery in identifying patterns in areas of success and those which may

require amending. It also provides us with an insight into why parents have or have not decided to select the Nursery.

Results The 'What do you think of us' cards during 2008 were sent to all parents with a stamped addressed envelope once they had visited the Nursery to seek their views, opinions and desire with regard to placing their child at the Nursery. However following an annual analysis of this it is clearly noted that the response rate is abysmal. From the 101 visits we received during the year only 2 were returned. In respect of this we have amended the procedure for 2009 in that the leaflets will be given to the parents at the end of the visit and the Manager will explain it's purpose and importance, again including a stamped addressed envelope, in the hope that this will encourage them to return the card.

From the two received it was noted that they rated the Nursery on it's; Facilities, environment staff, literature given and verbal information given as excellent and good with one satisfactory rating for décor. However this was at the beginning of 2008 and we have since re-decorated most areas with those remaining set for 2009.

The aspects most liked were the security and induction tour, friendly happy environment, close proximity to work, good standards of facilities and that the children seemed very content and my daughter was immediately taken by the place. The only negative comment received was it's close proximity to the busy road.

In line with the review, all parents are given a quality monitoring questionnaire to complete annually. The results of these are then summarised and discussed amongst all management and staff, if necessary, to devise means of improving certain aspects, consider points raised or provide feedback and praise where necessary.

Result: Praise was given to staff in line with comments made with regard to their caring nature and by creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

We are still in negotiation with regard to a pram shelter as we appreciate it is a great bonus to have a space allocated for them, however is a problem during periods of poor weather.

A few parents indicated that they would like to see more organised trips and thus we will be asking for volunteers within forthcoming newsletters as they are essential to reduce ratios to ensure safety on any outing. Although we have employed an additional member of staff for a Friday to allow for more walks.

Two comments were made in line with staff turnover. We have seen three staff members leave in line with Maternity this year and a further three are set for 2009, however we have introduced a salary increase in line with length of service, wage increase, many additional training courses, staff incentives and birthday gifts to aid with staff turnover within our control.

Due to parental requesting variety menu's are on a three weekly rotation as a pose to two. The new menu now includes fish dishes and additional meats.

During the Summer months the children will be taste testing a variety of exotic fruits to broaden their understanding of origin and taste. Additional vegetables have also been introduced throughout the menu.

Feedback and praise given to staff in line with parental response to their communication and approachability.

Comments made in line with recommending the Nursery to friends seeking childcare;

- * I have already told two of my friends.
- * My son is always happy when I collect him. He has developed into a confident and independent child. Which I believe the Nursery has played a big part within.
- * My child has really developed in the Nursery.
- * My child is very happy at the Nursery and that in itself is an indication to parents who are looking for a place in a Nursery.
- * Friendly, Professional and value for money.
- * No major problems encountered.
- * Our child has come along very well since being at the Nursery and seems very happy here.
- * Location.
- * My first child enjoyed it and that is why we came back. I do promote the Nursery positively when asked at work.
- * My children are happy there.
- * My child has come along well. Her attitude is good and she is obviously happy.
- * My child looks forward to coming.
- * Child's experience has been excellent. The Nursery catered for his dietary needs when tested and on an exclusion diet. They helped him settle when moving groups. Staff seem to go that little bit extra to ensure everything is just right to suit individual needs.

Issues raised which remain outstanding include;

Celery & cucumber given too often (once a week)
Party food causing hyperactivity (only at party time)

We also consider all complaints, irrelevant of their severity, and note the main area of concern and working alongside the parents devise a resolution or plan of action to ensure all parties involved are satisfied with the outcome.

January 2008 – December 2008

18 January 2008	Confidentiality + Accident sustained	Full investigation carried out. Allegations not sustained.
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Additionally, all parents on receiving their letter to terminate their child's placement are provided with a leaver's form which identifies their reason for leaving and overall opinion and satisfaction with the Nursery and provisions provided. The results of these, in line with their reasons for leaving, are again discussed amongst all managers and staff, if necessary, to devise means of improving, provide praise or consider any issues/points raised.

Through reviewing the leavers left for 2008 (63 in total) it is noted that none bear reference to any form of complaint. The main reasons for leaving were noted as the following;

- 21 Left to attend school in line with their age.
- 2 Left as mum was expecting another baby.
- 5 Left to find a Nursery closer to home, as travelling and time allowances with work were an issue.
- 9 Left as they were unable to afford the monthly fees. Some left with fees outstanding.
- 5 Left as their funding for the placement had ended.
- 6 Left to become a full time mum in line with the credit crunch and change in circumstances.
- 7 Left as they were moving house and out of the area.

We have discussed the above as a management team and have noted a larger loss of children to school this year however we appreciate that this will fluctuate annually. We have seen an increase in children leaving in line with redundancies and parents choosing to care for their children full time at home and after vast discussions we will be looking and considering our annual price review with careful consideration in February 2009. There was also a reduction in the amount of children leaving to attend a Nursery closer to home. Finally additionally this year there have been a number of families moving out of the area and some even abroad which is completely beyond our control.

Additionally we follow up all enquiries to establish why individuals have decided not to select the Nursery as their child care provider.

Finally, we monitor and take note of the thank you cards we receive when various children leave and the chocolates, cards and presents we receive at Christmas time under the tree for the enjoyment of the managers and staff.

STAFF

All staff were issued with our staff quality monitoring questionnaires annually. The results of these were drawn up, recorded and summarised and discussed amongst all Management and individual staff, if necessary, to devise means of improving areas, procedures etc, provide praise or consider any issues arisen.

All staff stated they were happy within their work and expressed a positive response to training. This will therefore be continued throughout 2009.

In line with our annual review we will look to revise the current pay scale and annual holiday entitlement.

A clear training schedule has been implemented for 2009 to ensure all staff receive training within areas of interest in addition to areas required. All staff will be put onto their NVQ L2/3 once they have passed their three month probationary period.

Staff at Little Angels work extremely hard and this will be rewarded further with more individual praise. Areas of weakness detected will be addressed immediately and further training and support provided.

During 2008 exit interviews were scheduled to take place on the staff members last day at the Nursery to obtain a view of their experiences whilst working at the Nursery and obtain a reason for leaving. However following an analysis of this procedure over the last year it has been noted that the date allocated has proven unsuccessful for a number of reasons. Out of the 15 scheduled only three were conducted for various reasons;

Staff dismissed and thus left earlier than planned

Staff left early and simply not worked their notice period.

Staff leaving without any notice

Not returning from maternity leave

Staff shortages preventing the release of staff member to conduct meeting

In respect of this we have amended the procedure for 2009. This will now involve conducting the meeting within three days of the employee handing in their notice letter. This will allow for more flexibility to arrange a day, but additionally, and more importantly, allow for any concerns or problems that may be raised an opportunity to be resolved and possibly thus aid staff retention.

Result The staff questioned identified that they liked working with the children and meeting new people, however they were not as enthusiastic with regard to their pay, feedback from Seniors and dirty nappies. They felt that their duties were outlined clearly and suggestions for improving their job included; more praise (inputted for 2009).

The three staff identified their reasons for leaving as; time for a new challenge and experience and time to move on, a job found closer to home and a higher paid job with more responsibilities however all three stated that there was nothing the company could do in light of this.

Finally all three staff indicated that they had received adequate training during their employment and had indeed developed in confidence and self esteem during their employment.

All staff attend regular staff meetings and training sessions. The agenda for these meetings are all kept on file and minutes kept. These are again considered within the week following the meeting and action is taken, if required, in line with each. The views and feelings of all staff members are considered in line with each of the above.

Finally all feedback and comments in line with the staffs monthly, three monthly and sessional evaluations, annual appraisals and feedback questionnaires are all documented and considered. All issues are discussed amongst the Managers and individual staff members and any action required is outlined and initiated.